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# **STUDIES**

## **in the Spirituality of Jesuits**



**The Jesuits and Catholic Higher Education**  
by  
**David J. O'Brien**

Published by the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality,  
especially for American Jesuits working out their *aggiornamento*  
in the spirit of Vatican Council II

## THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCY SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

consists of a group of Jesuits from various provinces who are listed below. The members were appointed by the Fathers Provincial of the United States.

The Purpose of the Seminar is to study topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and to communicate the results to the members of the Assistancy. The hope is that this will lead to further discussion among all American Jesuits--in private, or in small groups, or in community meetings. All this is done in the spirit of Vatican Council II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original charismatic inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the changed circumstances of modern times. The members of the Seminar welcome reactions or comments in regard to the topics they publish.

To achieve these purposes, especially amid today's pluralistic cultures, the Seminar must focus its direct attention sharply, frankly, and specifically on the problems, interests, and opportunities of the Jesuits of the United States. However, many of these interests are common also to Jesuits of other regions, or to other priests, religious men or women, or lay men or women. Hence the studies of the Seminar, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

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## Editor's Foreword: The Origins of This Study

For many years the members of the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality have been eager to present a study on the Jesuit apostolate in higher education, now being carried on in the greatly changed circumstances which have arisen in our colleges and universities since the 31st General Congregation ended in 1966. But the Seminar members felt blocked by this problem: What approach could we take, with hope of reasonable success, to so complex a situation which is still in a process of evolution?

While we were casting about once more for possibilities during our meeting of January 23-25, 1981, someone remarked: Recently Dr. David O'Brien of Holy Cross College read a paper to the faculty of Fairfield University, explaining what the Jesuits are trying to do in their universities in this era of Vatican Council II.

This information sparked further discussion. We Jesuits have perhaps been viewing this complex problem too much only through our own eyes; and this is sometimes discouraging. Why not take a look at ourselves through the eyes of someone else--a layman who for two decades has been closely associated with us in our educational institutions, understands them and us, and has been sharing our hopes, successes, and frustrations? This might help us to see things in a new perspective.

Dr. O'Brien has a background of experiences which well qualify him to present the viewpoints of a Catholic layman and parent on the Jesuit mission in higher education in North America. He received his B.A. from the University of Notre Dame in 1960 and his Ph.D. from the University of Rochester in 1965. He has taught at Loyola College, Montréal, from 1964 to 1969, and at Holy Cross College from then until now. His fields of special interest, on which he has written extensively, have been American Catholic intellectual, social, and ecclesiastical history.

During his years of teaching in Montreal he was mulling "the possibility of writing a series of essays on contemporary issues confronting American Catholics." In 1968 he taught in the summer session of Marquette University, and he took the occasion to converse with numerous people conversant with these issues throughout Milwaukee. "That remarkable summer in Milwaukee," he wrote, "stimulated me to begin." These quotations are taken from page xi

of his book which soon appeared: *The Renewal of American Catholicism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972). In 1976 he received a leave of absence from Holy Cross to Serve as a consultant for the United States Bishops' Bicentennial Program. At that time, too, he published an article which many of our readers will remember: "The Holy Cross Case" (*Commonweal*, October 8, 1976, pages 647-653). A little later came still another book: *Renewing the Earth: Catholic Documents on Peace, Justice, and Liberation*. Edited by David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon (New York: Doubleday, 1977).

That is the background from which has sprung, at the Seminar's request, the study published in this present issue. Dr. O'Brien presents a survey recalling our experiences of the past fifteen years and a suggested program for the future. We publish his work with gratitude to him. It is food for our thought.

George E. Ganss, S.J., Chairman  
The American Assistancy Seminar

# THE JESUITS AND CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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## PART I. HISTORICAL RETROSPECT: RENEWAL AND MISSION IN JESUIT EDUCATION

### A. The Mission of Catholic Higher Education<sup>1</sup>

In 1967 historian Philip Gleason, after surveying the history of Catholic higher education in the United States, noted that in the past Catholics "confessed to many weaknesses in their schools, but no one really doubted that these institutions had a reason for being, a vitally important function to fulfill."<sup>2</sup> Yet only seven years later the leaders of the nation's 28 Jesuit colleges and universities launched a process of renewal designed to provide something surprisingly thought lacking, "a rationale . . . which would make intellectually comprehensible and psychologically satisfying the purposes, mission and goals of the Society in the apostolate of higher education."<sup>3</sup> Now, fifteen years after Gleason wrote those words, Catholic colleges and universities, having overcome their perceived defects of intellectual isolation and ecclesiastical domination, are finding it difficult to justify themselves as Catholic institutions. Indeed, the very process which accomplished the one goal may have undercut the other. In a recent study of Marquette University, Father Gregory Lucey concludes that "successful efforts to improve the school's academic quality" were seen by Marquette faculty and administration as moving the institution "toward academic professionalism to the detriment of its Catholicity."<sup>4</sup>

Changes in the composition of faculty and student bodies, in sponsoring religious communities, and in the religious and cultural environments beyond the schools have all enormously complicated the issue of Catholic mission in higher education. Yet, the declining enrollments anticipated in the next decade make distinctive identity crucially important for private institutions.<sup>5</sup> Father Timothy Healy, president of Georgetown University, argues that in the future "institutional survival is likely to depend upon



a college's sense of its own identity and on its capacity to broadcast that identity to prospective students."<sup>6</sup> For most colleges, the source of that identity is their history as Catholic schools, often associated with a particular religious community, and those traditions are often very much alive among students, alumni, parents, benefactors, trustees, even faculty. But each school's ability to have a "sense" of that identity, much more to "broadcast" it, depends less upon shared memories than on what it is doing now and what it is saying about itself, both in its internal conversations and in its dialogues with wider publics. Often the gloss of Catholicity in public relations and recruiting materials contrasts sharply with the lack of religious or ecclesiastical references in curriculum, governance, or even in those discussions which give form and sometimes substance to academic community life.

The Church, for its part, has not abandoned higher education. Parents and benefactors are still amazingly generous, enrollments remain high despite predictions of decline, and Church authorities regularly register their support. The American bishops recently published a pastoral letter reaffirming their commitment to Catholic higher education and urging Catholics to continue their financial sacrifices on its behalf. On the other hand, they noted their "expectation" that the colleges and universities would "continue to manifest with unmistakable clarity their Catholic identity and mission."<sup>7</sup> In similar fashion Pope John Paul II, speaking to American Catholic educators on October 7, 1979, made his commitment clear while defining the Catholic mission in higher education in terms of three tasks.

First, he called upon Catholic colleges and universities to make "a specific contribution to the Church through high quality scientific research, in depth study of problems and a just sense of history, together with a concern to show the full meaning of the human person regenerated in Christ." Second, he called upon the schools to "train young men and women of outstanding knowledge who, having made a synthesis of faith and culture, will be both capable and willing to assume tasks in the service of the community . . . and to bear witness to their faith before the world." Finally, he noted the need for each school to "set up among its faculty and students a real community which bears witness to a living and operative Christianity."<sup>8</sup> While there are signs that the pope and the

Vatican would like to establish stronger controls over theological faculties, particularly in seminaries and pontifical institutions, there can be little doubt of the Holy Father's support for Catholic education which will produce needed research, train persons for service to the Church and the world, and serve as a sign of an intelligent, vibrant Christianity.

Administrators make valiant efforts to assure Church authorities that the schools are in fact maintaining their Catholic identity and carrying out the tasks assigned. A 1976 report prepared by the College and University Department of the National Catholic Educational Association (now the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities) argued that the nation's Catholic schools were sustaining their Catholic commitment by "an institutional profession of Catholic identity." In addition, the report stated, "they maintain a Catholic presence through their departments of religion and theology, the many Catholic administrators and faculty who are associated with them, their official policies and institutional concerns, the impact of theological and philosophical reflection on the various disciplines, and their programs of pastoral ministry." They try, with varying degrees of success, according to the report, to manifest the four characteristics of "The Catholic University in the Modern World" as these were described by delegates to the Second Congress of Catholic Universities of the World in 1975:

1. A Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the University community as such; 2. a continuing reflection in the light of Christian faith upon the growing treasure of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research; 3. fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the church; 4. an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family. . . .<sup>9</sup>

Faculty and members of religious communities on various campuses are far from confident that these fine words in fact mean very much. In a recent report of a committee of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, the authors argue that Catholic colleges and universities depend upon the "extraordinary sacrifices" of Catholics, and that people are not likely to continue to make great efforts for Catholic schools if their goals and objectives are vague and uncertain. They charge that in many Catholic schools much confusion abounds; faculty selection and promotion, curriculum, research priorities, and governance ordinarily reflect little that is

distinctively Catholic.<sup>10</sup> They are not alone, for on many campuses a felt need for a clearer sense of mission and purpose cannot overcome internal barriers which prevent the articulation of clear goals and objectives, a sense of mission, related to the Catholic tradition and identity of the school.

Even more important, it seems difficult even to initiate the conversation on more than one Catholic campus. Understandably, the process of renewal seems threatening to faculty and to sponsoring religious communities. In the days when identity seemed clear and purpose was self-evident, the position of the lay faculty was not always happy. As Sister Kathleen Ash has pointed out:

When those interested in revitalizing the sense of purpose of a particular school express dissatisfaction with a Catholicism so unobtrusive that Catholic and non-Catholic alike can pass through without being touched by it, they raise nervous goose-pimples on the flesh of colleagues who wonder what their part and fate will be in the new scheme of things.<sup>11</sup>

Precisely for this reason, Sister Kathleen argues, it is important for the lay faculty to wrestle with these problems of identity and mission themselves, and that they not allow it to be done for them by administrators or outside bodies.

Faculty dialogue on the issue must start from a basis of trust, more difficult to achieve than normally admitted, and must incorporate the spirit of ecumenism, service, and humanism of Vatican II, particularly of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. Premature definitions and mutual anathemas should obviously be avoided, but at the same time such dialogue should seek to define goals and purposes that are something more than a least common denominator of vague references to "high quality liberal arts education." Catholic faculty have a special responsibility to make clear that the mission of the Church and the school is grounded in a vision and an experience that transcend denomination and speak to possibilities alive in all persons, including those possibilities cherished by the liberal tradition in Western education. As Sister Kathleen puts it:

What must be avoided is a simpleminded faith that the appellation "Catholic" assures that the person bearing it has the ability to help students develop a meaningful philosophy of life or a reasoned faith, that she is a better exemplar of



gospel values than her agnostic sister or brother, that she is capable of prophetic vision needed to renew institution, church and state, that she understands the profound changes that have taken place in the church in which she claims membership, or that she will be a better witness to the ideals of Christian community than a person of another belief. The question of faculty selection will surely not be solved by saying simply that given the same academic credentials preference should be given to Catholics. Faculty members, in order to discuss renewal fruitfully, must start from a base of trust and the conviction that they are true partners of one another first of all, that human and humane, Christian and Catholic goals mesh, and that people of different faiths and even of no particular denomination are not on our faculties on sufferance or as tokens to so-called opposition views.<sup>12</sup>

### B. The Jesuits

Like all Catholic organizations and most Catholics, the Society of Jesus is living through a period of rapid and radical change. Near-revolutionary developments in Catholic self-understanding in the last generation have opened challenging new opportunities for mission in and for the Church but have also raised questions about the Church, its ministries, even faith itself. Seeking to renew its sense of purpose and review its numerous apostolates, the Society must also deal with a new emphasis upon personal responsibility and collegial decision-making. While all this has been going on, membership has been declining. In March, 1979, for example, there were 823 men in the New England Province, but one third of that number were over sixty years of age; only about 140 were under 40.<sup>13</sup> As the Province seeks to maintain its older apostolates, including its heavy commitment to higher education, it is being challenged to take on new responsibilities, especially in social ministry, all with limited resources of personnel and money. Diverse constituencies in and out of the Church look to Jesuits for leadership and support, and each finds an articulate voice within the Society, even within each local Jesuit community. In this setting, clarification of the Society's distinctive commitment and establishment of clear priorities become increasingly important, even while internal diversity and confused expectations make that more and more difficult.

Just as it is hard for Catholics and non-Catholics alike to become accustomed to a Catholic Church that does not speak with a single voice, so it is difficult to understand that the Society of Jesus, that symbol of tight, disciplined, militant Catholicism, no longer presents a united



front, even to its own members. In a very short period of time each member of the Society has been forced to confront his faith and his vocation, to ask the meaning of his Christian commitment, his Catholic allegiance, his calling as a priest, and his role within the Society and his particular apostolate. Many Jesuits have emerged with a renewed commitment to the Church and an invigorated dedication to service. New visions of the Church and its mission are inspiring Catholics around the world, and none have responded to Vatican II or to the needs of the world with greater courage, energy, and enthusiasm than the Jesuits. Hundreds of American Jesuits have taken heart from the Society's struggle to renew itself in light of the signs of the times.

With all this said, it is still necessary to emphasize the internal diversity and consequent tensions within Jesuit communities, especially those associated with institutions of higher education. In 1969 Jesuit academicians meeting in Denver were told to anticipate the breakdown of the traditional Jesuit residence and the formation of smaller communities gathered around common interests and designed to provide more intimate and supportive forms of community life.<sup>14</sup> That prediction has come true; while the "big houses" survive, many Jesuits now live in smaller communities, often having only occasional direct contact with one another. Moreover, the legal separation of local Jesuit communities from the colleges and universities they serve has introduced another source of division between the Jesuit community, headed by the rector, and the school administration, led by the president. The rector is responsible for community life and is accountable to the provincial for local response to Society needs and priorities. The president as a Jesuit is a member of the local community and responsible to the Society's authorities, but as president he is responsible to the board of trustees of his college or university. Jesuit personnel thus relate to two sources of authority, the rector and the president. If communication and collaboration between these men are less than ideal, as well they might be in a time of uncertainty and change, this can be a source of real anxiety and even conflict for all members of the local community.<sup>15</sup>

The problems of the individual Jesuit go even deeper. He may well be a modern academic, deeply committed to his discipline and heavily involved in research, writing, and teaching. His faculty colleagues expect from him

solid performance as a teacher and scholar. The president values his willingness to be the Jesuit representative on important committees and to be available for sessions with alumni and parents concerned about the Jesuit character of the school. The leader of campus ministry may look to him for aid in the pastoral services of the school, saying Mass, leading retreats, counseling students, simply being around at the odd hours kept by college youth. All the while the Jesuit general, provincial, and perhaps rector are reminding him of his need to pray regularly, live simply, and relate his work to "faith and justice" and to the needs of poor and oppressed people around the world. Differing expectations confront him at every turn. He may agree in theory that "the effectiveness of the Society at an institution depends in large part upon [its work] being a collective effort," as Father William Richardson put it at the Denver meeting.<sup>16</sup> But experience may lead him to conclude that it doesn't work, that the integration of varied ideals may not be possible. The uncertainty about Jesuit mission as it influences the individual Jesuit was well expressed at the 1969 meeting by Father William Scott of LeMoyne:

Nowadays when you become involved in Jesuit institutions, you find yourself involved in a double community--the academic community and your own religious community. Your religious community can sometimes be, if not destructive, at least not supportive, of the commitments you have to the academic community. In other words, I am not at all sure that it is possible for us to be communally dedicated to the Jesuit vision, and at the same time supportive of one another in the academic community.<sup>17</sup>

Yet, Jesuits are remarkable men. Careful selection and regular evaluation and screening of candidates, sophisticated formation, and, especially, careful, rigorous training in the Spiritual Exercises, provide most Jesuits with considerable personal resources for coping with the pressures amid which they live and work. Where the confusion of voices is present, most make some personal decisions regarding priorities; remaining committed in a general way to the corporate mission of the Society, they concentrate on their own apostolate. Often, these men have grown weary of the collective enterprise, with its endless meetings and fruitless discussions which usually seem unrelated in any positive way to the work in which they are engaged. At best, the local Jesuit community adopts a policy of live-and-let-live, responding to calls for corporate reflection that it may be best "to leave

well enough alone."<sup>18</sup> While some Jesuits worry that such an attitude may be suicidal for Jesuit influence, and inappropriate in light of the decisions of general congregations, it sometimes seems in terms of personal experiences of Jesuits at least understandable, perhaps even necessary.

### C. The Process of Renewal

Theologian Richard McBrien has argued that the process of renewal in the Church simply involves the clarification of its mission and the mobilization of its resources for the pursuit of that mission. This requires an understanding of the mission of the Church generally, an examination of the relation of each particular person, organization, and institution to that mission, the breakdown of broad goals into specific objectives, and the motivation and support of persons to join in the pursuit of those goals. As the Church has become in effect a voluntary association, the entire process requires broad participation, for people will only work to achieve objectives which they have helped to set, which express their faith, their needs, and their aspirations. Much of the noise and conflict in the Church today arises from the difficult task of finding procedures and policies which will make possible this process of reflection, consultation, decision, and action. The Society of Jesus, like everyone else, has not worked out a successful process, but it is struggling to do so, and its effort, for better or worse, bears directly on the life of each institution with which Jesuits are associated.

In the years following Vatican II the Jesuits around the world attempted to respond to the council and its new models of Church and community life. It was a difficult time. Between 1966 and 1974 the Society of Jesus lost 1500 ordained men. On the eve of the 32nd General Congregation, sociologist Father John L. Thomas summarized numerous studies of Jesuit life around the world. "The basic problem we are currently experiencing in the Society of Jesus," he wrote, "stems from a lack of agreement regarding the fundamental beliefs and rationales underlying our assumptions, values, attitudes, and practice relating to religious life."<sup>19</sup> Clearly, the problems of the Society reflected the wider issue of the mission and purpose of the Church which was at the same time causing turmoil throughout the Catholic world. To remedy the situation the Jesuits initiated a



process of consultation which climaxed in 1974, at the 32nd General Congregation. Among the sixteen documents which this general congregation succeeded in completing, three are particularly important for our topic. They set forth renewed understanding of the witness of poverty, the nature of community life, and "Our Mission Today." This latter document was most important, for it served as a basis for individual Jesuits and local communities to reevaluate their own work, priorities, and purposes.

The General Congregation placed at the center of Jesuit mission "the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement."<sup>20</sup> Responding to an informed understanding of the state of the world, the Congregation made the "clear decision" that "the Society should commit itself to work for the promotion of justice." As Georgetown's Father Healy describes this decision:

Each Christian generation must find for itself how it translates its past into action, where exactly it finds the laboring presence of God in His creation. The Jesuits have corporately opted for a social translation and for the justice of God as the point of intersection.<sup>21</sup>

The Society took this step with full awareness of its own failures on this score in the past, and in spite of the reservations of Pope Paul VI, who feared that other essential elements of Jesuit apostolate might be neglected.

In the first serious study of the 32nd General Congregation, Father Thomas P. Faase emphasizes the term "basic choice" or "fundamental option" that occurred again and again in debates and documents. Delegates came from academic, intellectual, and administrative positions, but through debates and the leadership of Father General Pedro Arrupe, they were led to make a clear decision to align themselves as a society with the poor people of the world. Faase argues that they made a clear shift from "elite status" within the structure of a bounded Church to "minority status" addressing the whole world on behalf of the disenfranchised and poor. If taken literally, Faase argues, this commitment would render much of the order's existing work "illegitimate." Instead of reaffirming established apostolates, the Congregation insisted that:

We must undertake a thoroughgoing reassessment of our traditional apostolic methods, attitudes and institutions with a view to adapting them to the new needs of the times and to a world in the process of rapid change. . . .

For our own sake, just as much as for the sake of our contemporaries, we must find a new language, a new set of symbols, that will enable us to leave our fallen idols behind us and rediscover the true God.<sup>22</sup>

Every institution and apostolate is to be examined to determine how it will promote justice and serve faith. What was formerly a laudable pursuit for some becomes a requirement of all:

Moreover, the service of faith and the promotion of justice cannot be for us simply one ministry among others. It must be the integrating factor of all our ministries; and not only of our ministries but of our inner life as individuals, as communities, and as a world-wide brotherhood. This is what our Congregation means by a decisive choice.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, Faase concludes, apostolates which accomplish this decisive choice will continue to receive support and "the line of Jesuit values and leadership will be marshalled in those directions; apostolates that do not reform to meet these criteria will lose Jesuit support."

The General Congregation left unclear the exact relationship between these goals and the Jesuit educational apostolate. Father Pedro Arrupe, however, had addressed the issue earlier in a letter to Jesuit alumni of the world:

We have to be the voice of those who have no voice, studying for this purpose the situations in which they find themselves; learning to represent them when they cannot be heard; and, above all, providing them with a voice and a platform by means of education and a wise conscientization.

We have to strive to transform the mentality of society, not only among those in power but also among the middle classes whose influence is great in this field; so that, first, they come to understand the problem of human misery, and then attain to that indispensable interior change of heart which is a necessary condition for a just and lasting solution at all levels, structural, political, and social.

Rather than a simple disposition to practice justice and charity in personal relations, Father Arrupe made clear that education for justice demanded a stance of fundamental resistance to many of the economic, political, and educational policies of the present day. It demanded too, a clear recognition that commitment to justice goes beyond confrontation with personal sinfulness to the analysis, evaluation, and revision of the structures of injustice which dominate much of the world. The goal of Jesuit education, then, is helping Christians learn to live authentic and

effective lives for others, understanding the injustices of the world, analyzing their sources, and organizing "technologies and ideologies" for dealing with them, remembering always that "the oppressed . . . must be the principal agents of change. The role of the privileged is to assist them to reinforce from above the pressure exerted from below on the structures that need to be changed."<sup>24</sup>

The General Congregation's emphasis on faith and justice and the general's insistence on "education for justice" was not universally applauded either inside or outside the Society. Even before the congregation ended, Pope Paul VI expressed some reservations, including a warning that the Jesuits "must not forget that the priest should inspire lay Catholics, since in the promotion of justice theirs is the more demanding role." A short time later seventy heads of Jesuit colleges and universities came to Rome to consult with Arrupe; they heard more warnings from the pope, who urged them to practice "complete orthodoxy of teaching, firm obedience to the magisterium of the Church." In addition, while affirming the desirability of Jesuits collaborating with laity and non-Jesuit priests in the conduct of their institutions, the pope insisted that "care should be taken that this is done in such a way that the Society retains the authority necessary for it to discharge its Catholic responsibilities."<sup>25</sup>

It was fear of precisely this approach which made many American Jesuit presidents nervous about the new thrust of the Society. As early as 1972, Father William Ryan, then director of the Center of Concern and now provincial of English-speaking Jesuits in Canada, noted that "Jesuit university communities have tended to become a source of opposition to more adventurous thinking and action in the social area."<sup>26</sup>

Already committed to legal separation of the Society from its colleges and universities, well along the way to adopting American standards of academic governance, the presidents warned against any delusion that Jesuit goals could be easily incorporated into institutional life. Father Arrupe, for his part, eventually endorsed these new arrangements and urged efforts to find new forms of collaboration. To Jesuit intellectuals concerned that the activist tone of his pronouncements undercut the apostolate of scholarship, he responded with a letter notable for its moderation and warmly supportive of a Jesuit intellectual commitment conscious of its



relation to the overall search for faith and justice.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Arrupe noted that the 1974 Congregation did not override the previous 31st General Congregation of 1965-1966, which had strongly reaffirmed the Jesuit commitment to the apostolate of education. The decrees of the two Congregations go together, with the faith-and-justice emphasis of *Our Mission Today* providing a framework of evaluating and renewing particular expressions of the Society's continuing commitment to research and teaching.

On the other hand, despite resistance, even opposition, to the faith-and-justice emphasis, Father Arrupe has not retreated. In the fall of 1978, meeting with Procurators from around the world, Father Arrupe indicated his basic dissatisfaction with the implementation of the decrees of the 32nd General Congregation. According to Father Donald G. Clifford, editor of the *National Jesuit News*, Father Arrupe asked "to what extent is the promotion of justice in the service of faith a concern of our *whole* life and a dimension of *all* our apostolic endeavors, and not just one more apostolic field, reserved to those who specialize in the social apostolate?" (emphasis Clifford's). Dealing with education, Arrupe reaffirmed its importance to Jesuit mission but insisted on the need for "a continuing re-evaluation of its goals, content and methods" in light of contemporary Jesuit ideals and objectives.<sup>28</sup> The challenge is still direct; again Father Healy spells it out:

Any college or university with which Jesuits are associated must work for justice and educate for justice. If this is not the burden of what it tries to accomplish in the hearts of its students, as well as in its corporate presence, wherever it may lie in the world at large, then it is not a Jesuit university. This does not mean that its excellence as a university is diminished. If, however, it wishes to add the ancient soubriquet "Jesuit" there is where it must stand.<sup>29</sup>

The Jesuits are an international organization with members for whom the mission of justice is direct, immediate, and dangerous. In May, 1978, Holy Cross College gave an honorary degree to Father Cesar Jerez, Jesuit provincial of Central America, whose men have been murdered, threatened, and jailed for their work on behalf of the poor. Some days later, while addressing the graduates of Canisius College, Father Jerez was able to put the challenge of Jesuit renewal directly to his audience, something he could not do during the ceremony at Holy Cross, where he was not a speaker:



What you can not do without becoming ashamed of yourselves is to . . . live the good life of manipulated unconcerned people . . . who grant honorary degrees to people from the Third World but refuse to join them in the fight for justice and liberty for the poor of the world.<sup>30</sup>

Father Jerez demanded of the graduates that they decide which side they were on in the struggle for justice for the poor of the world; that kind of challenge has become common for Jesuits, as they attempt to understand contemporary Jesuit mission in light of the General Congregation and the needs of the Church and the world.

There are 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, with 190,000 students, operating budgets totaling \$900,000,000, and assets of one and a half billion dollars. They contain 22 schools of education, 13 of law, 4 medical schools, and 5 dental schools. Twenty-five percent of available Jesuit manpower goes into higher education. Few Jesuits argue that the option for the poor and the emphasis on faith and justice require abandonment of this enormous commitment, though some do believe that the Society should concentrate its resources on a small number of colleges and universities. Most, however, still regard this system of higher education as a unique opportunity to serve the Church and its mission, provided only that the Jesuits themselves become more decisive and strategic in working within these institutions. "For better or for worse, we Jesuits are in the power business," Father Dominic Maruca wrote recently. "We and the alumni of our schools have been endowed with power which can be used for individual selfish purposes or as a means of gifting society by transforming it."<sup>32</sup>

While this increasingly taken-for-granted insistence on societal transformation still strikes American ears as radical and "political," it is fully in line with the basic development of contemporary Catholic renewal. The Vatican Council announced the Church's determination to make its own "the joys and the hopes, the griefs and anxieties, of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted."<sup>33</sup> In 1971 the Synod of Bishops proclaimed that "action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel."<sup>34</sup> The fundamental option of the 32nd General Congregation thus was grounded both in the experience of Jesuits around the world and in the teaching of the Church, whose stress

on peacemaking and action on behalf of justice have been in no way diminished by Pope John Paul II. He too insists, together with his predecessors John XXIII and Paul VI, the Council, and the 1971 Synod, on the need for education for justice, as have the American bishops in a series of statements, including their recent pastoral letter on higher education. Schools which are Catholic, then, cannot escape their responsibility to consider how this dimension of contemporary Catholic faith can become a living feature of their life. As theologian Richard McBrien puts it:

If . . . the emphasis on the social and political dimensions of the church's mission seems destined to continue and even be intensified, then the Catholic institution of higher learning will find itself increasingly challenged and tested. . . . If it is legitimate to ask about the doctrinal orientation of an institution's faculty, curriculum, and program, then it is at least as important to evaluate the socio-political orientation of these same components. . . . Our moral assessment of such socio-political issues as nuclear disarmament, human rights, and a society's obligations to its poorer and weaker citizens is a matter of some relevance to the Christian faith and the mission of the church.<sup>35</sup>

#### D. Implementation and Frustration

Even before the 32nd General Congregation, the American Jesuit Assistancy had initiated a study of its educational apostolate. Local Jesuit communities were invited to deliberate on their corporate apostolate at the colleges and universities they served, to develop plans to implement concrete goals at each school, and to share more directly in promoting contemporary Jesuit ideals in their local situation. Initially the leaders had hoped to generate a national rationale for Jesuit higher education, but local officials persuaded them that the diversity of local situations prevented that. Instead, Project One, as the study was called, was expected to result in a clearer sense of Jesuit mission based on local response to the call to renewal which came during the process from the 32nd General Congregation.<sup>36</sup>

Unfortunately Project One ran up against the same reality which hampered renewal throughout the American Church. Intended to bring Catholics to a more creative encounter with contemporary life, renewal often exposed internal differences and deep anxieties which rapid change had brought about. Instead of facing outward, to respond to the needs of the Church and the world, Jesuits at most campuses either refused to take part in the discussion, usually for fear of the conflicts it would create, or they addressed the

parochial problems of their own institution. Thus the reports which came from more than half the Jesuit colleges and universities addressed such problems as the lack of communication between local Jesuits and the Jesuit administration, or the somewhat wider issue of relations between the decreasing Jesuit faculty and staff and the growing lay, often non-Catholic, faculty and administration. Action programs featured such items as Jesuit hospitality for lay faculty, education of faculty and students in Jesuit ideals and traditions, pastoral emphasis on the spiritual opportunities available to professors and students, or affirmative action in the hiring of Jesuit teachers and administrators. Only a handful of schools even noticed the need to address problems of justice and peace, despite the fact that such concerns had become central to Catholic self-understanding in the teachings of the magisterium and the experience of Churches in other nations. If on the basis of these reports one had to determine what was distinctive about Jesuit education, it would be a stress on the liberal arts and on campus ministry, and even the references to liberal education remained general and undefined in every report. The lack of enthusiasm about the very notion of a corporate apostolate, the bitterness evident in discussion of many local problems, and the almost total disregard of the socio-political dimensions of Catholic identity did not encourage optimism about the implementation of the General Congregation's directives on American Jesuit campuses.

E. The American Provincials' Letter on "The Jesuit Mission in Higher Education"

At Easter, 1978, the American provincials responded to these reports with a letter addressed to the nation's Jesuits setting forth "The Jesuit Mission in Higher Education," completing Project One.<sup>37</sup> The letter illustrated the problems which had beset the project, for the provincials indicated that they were not trying to express a "national rationale" for Jesuit education but simply to continue to "direct and stimulate the implementation of Jesuit ideals within local communities." They began by emphasizing that while some Jesuits questioned the value and viability of a continued Jesuit commitment to higher education, they themselves were firmly committed: "Thoroughly professional cultivation of the disciplines



influencing the world's vision, and its direction therefore toward good or bad, is a preeminent responsibility for us."

In outlining ways in which contemporary Jesuit ideals could find expression in institutions of higher learning, the provincials showed the same modesty and tentativeness which characterized the reports in Project One. They called upon communities to build a fuller sense of community among themselves, particularly through a life of prayer and a frugal style of living. "Loyal and affectionate support of differing viewpoints among brothers" and "fraternal encouragement of creativity in developing one another's gifts for fuller service" should make Jesuit communities "creative centers of multi-disciplinary understanding and cooperation" into which faculty and students should be gradually incorporated.

Communities were told to continue the Project One process of planning, drawing up, and reviewing rationales and "concrete plans of action." In this process, communication and cooperation between rector and president are considered essential. Taking note of the complex problems confronting presidents, the provincials insist on their own responsibility, and that of local communities, to consistently provide these men with "cooperation and expressions of moral and fraternal support." They concluded by reemphasizing the need for planning at the local level, linking that process to their own continuing promise to supply manpower. While pledging to "assign young Jesuits" to the educational apostolate, the provincials "assume that, for their part, institutional leaders are ready to make practical plans with us to encourage the use of these trained young Jesuits and the purposes they represent in our corporate enterprise." Again, in pledging collaboration, they stress "the responsibility the Society has given [local leaders] to develop strong community participation in the progressive refinement of rationale statements and plans of action. We will review these plans, evaluate and approve them, and give all the support we can to their attainment."

The provincials also urge local Jesuits to share "our Ignatian heritage" with lay faculty, administration, and staff, to make Jesuit residences into "centers of a Jesuit presence that initiates intellectual and religious services for students, faculty, and staff." They endorse continued emphasis on liberal arts education to offset "career specialization

and narrow professionalism," and special efforts to incorporate ethical dimensions into undergraduate and graduate professional training. Working with the local campus ministry, local "Jesuits can minister to an extraordinarily gifted and influential campus community" which provides "abundant resources . . . by which to serve students, faculty, and staff in 'inculturating' the sacramental and paraliturgical expressions of contemporary Catholic faith." Jesuits are urged to use their summers and leaves to experience problems of poverty and injustice at first hand and to seek out opportunities "to influence our world through consultation, research, publication, and public advocacy."

Even though the Project One reports had been sketchy at best in their response to the justice emphasis of the 32nd General Congregation, the provincials persisted. Jesuits in higher education, they stated emphatically, must take Our Mission Today seriously, especially its "call to be sensitive to the social and economic inequities that afflict the majority in the world today." Noting that "a number of our higher education communities have taken to heart this call, which is addressed to them as much as it is to those in more explicitly pastoral and social works," the provincials invited Jesuits in higher education

to develop this commitment further in a way appropriate to the educational apostolate. This will be a difficult task. . . . None of us has the blueprint. We must be convinced, however, of the urgency to develop this sensitivity through community reflection, planning and action. Related to our identity as apostles of justice in the service of faith is the traditional perception of Jesuits as *men of ethical concern*. Surely this concern must now go beyond our being sensitive confessors and competent moral counsellors. The mission of justice requires, particularly of Jesuits in higher education, the development of new concepts and analyses that will contribute to the solution of socio-economic inequities and other moral problems of our day.

While this statement marked the end of the Project One process, it is clear that the problems that arose are far from resolved. The project began with a public acknowledgment that a convincing corporate rationale for Jesuit education did not exist. Despairing of providing such a rationale at the national level, Jesuit authorities hoped that through a process of corporate reflection at the local level, Jesuit communities could develop their own individual corporate statements of purpose. Even

this proved impossible at many institutions. After four years of effort, the problem described by the Fathers of the 32nd General Congregation remained:

Our apostolic institutions, along with many of those of the Church herself, are involved in the same crisis that social institutions in general are presently undergoing. Here again is an experience we share with our contemporaries, and in a particularly painful way. The relevance of our work as religious priests and apostles is often enough not evident to the men and women around us. Not only that, despite the firmness of our faith and our convictions, the relevance of what we do may not be clear, sometimes, even to ourselves. This unsettles us, and in our insecurity we tend to respond to questioning with silence and to shy away from confrontation.<sup>38</sup>

Individual Jesuits often feel that only through their dedicated work in individual apostolates can the problem be resolved. Father General and most provincials, on the other hand, seem convinced of the need for corporate reflection, planning, and cooperation. The tension will undoubtedly persist, and it will undoubtedly hamper the effort of Jesuit colleges and universities to develop that sense of identity many feel is indispensable to their survival. This means, simply, that the Jesuits are likely to be no more able than the faculty to articulate a convincing, inspiring rationale for Jesuit presence. Recognition of this fact need not suggest that the effort should not be made, but only that non-Jesuits can join in the dialogue without fear that their participation is secondary and unnecessary. Contrary to common belief, the Jesuits have no rationale that they can pull out at the last minute to end the discussion. All can rather start from the common experience of commitment to the shared work in which they are engaged. The invitation of the Wheeling College Jesuits might suggest the proper spirit:

So we hope that we, all of us together, faculty, administration, and loyal, hard-working staff, have an enduring sense of our common enterprise. We hope that you will be willing to come to grips with the faith dimension of your own lives, that you will share with us the realities and complexities of the justice scene as you have come to know them, that you will be eager to explore with us the new frontiers of knowledge and harbor the hope that we can work together toward synthesis and integration, to the growing dignity and glory of all human persons. We need to be concerned together about Appalachia and bio-ethics, communications and computers, developing the skills of verbal and written expression and of all the fine arts, the career fields of the sciences, social and physical, and of philosophy, the struggle for food and the overarching search for peace--we have so much to do! And we have only just begun.<sup>39</sup>



## F. Manpower: The Critical Issue

One reason for the persistence of the provincials in pushing for local rationales and action plans is the overwhelming problem of Jesuit manpower. One sign of the times is a policy report of Father Michael J. Lavelle, Detroit provincial, who argues that shrinking numbers absolutely require the Society to engage in corporate planning to establish clear priorities. Each Jesuit apostolate must consider what it is trying to accomplish and how many Jesuits are needed. "A high school which spurns . . . self-evaluation . . . or the college that feels no compulsion to take Project One seriously . . . cannot have a great claim on province manpower," Lavelle warns. Neither John Carroll University nor Detroit took an active role in Project One; Lavelle suggests that if they cannot develop such a process of their own, he will eventually be compelled to notify the boards of trustees of those schools "that the province can no longer be counted on to help staff the organization with new blood in the future. Then the men will have to choose . . . on a man-by-man basis whether to stay and become the remnant of Israel or move to another institution."<sup>40</sup>

In a speech to the Jesuit Congregation of Procurators in September, 1978, Father Arrupe referred to the universities as "nerve centers for our apostolate and important means for propagating it in the long run," yet he pointed to the costs in money and personnel of maintaining them as problems requiring study and decision. In October, 1978, the presidents of Jesuit colleges and universities made "Jesuit manpower" the number-one priority for their Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities. Reporting on that meeting, Father William C. McInnes stated that there were 153 Jesuits pursuing doctoral degrees, a drop of 27 from last year. There were none in the fields of business administration, biology, and physics, only four in all the physical sciences.<sup>41</sup> In 1975 Jesuits provided less than 15% of the full-time faculty and administrative personnel in their colleges and universities. In the next 15 years, at least one half of these men will reach 65.<sup>42</sup> As McInnes and others note with apprehension, Jesuits may end up confined to campus ministry and top administration, isolated and without influence on academic programs and policies, a situation most regard as intolerable.

The manpower question cannot be avoided. With declining numbers



each Jesuit apostolate competes for available men. Provincials, under pressure from below to staff existing and valuable work and from the top to open new work, particularly in the area of social ministry, still have a strong role in assignments. Some Jesuits are free to accept academic appointments of their choice but some are now told by their provincials that they have a responsibility to help fulfill their province's commitments. Manpower needs will become critical in a very few years, and the provincials will have to establish some priorities; they will probably not be sympathetic to the needs of a Jesuit community that refuses to outline a corporate rationale, indicate how their work relates to the overall Jesuit mission, and determine the minimum number of men required to fulfill those objectives.

One solution to the manpower question and the specter of Jesuit influence confined to campus ministry and administration is, as Father Lavelle puts it somewhat boldly, "finding a surrogate for Jesuit personnel in an inspired faculty of non-Jesuits." Suggestions along this line were scattered through the Project One reports. In 1977 the Maryland Province brought together Jesuit and lay leaders from its campuses to explore new forms of collaboration. Father William C. McInnes, who had extensive experience as president of the University of San Francisco and now serves as the executive officer of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, has been a particularly outspoken champion of Jesuit-lay collaboration, which, he charges, has usually been "disdained . . . except for occasional rhetoric."<sup>43</sup>

In the past, McInnes argues, the religious "sponsors" of colleges and universities have been "the senior partners in the enterprise of education." "Without their leadership," he writes, "the classes would not have been taught, the buildings would not have been built, the ideals would not have been implemented. But, as the enterprise grew, the gift of sacrifice became threatened by psychological possessiveness and resistance to change." With the decline of vocations, the maturing of lay people in the Church, and the professionalization of faculty, the situation has changed. "Modern professionals want to share in the decisions they are called upon to implement," McInnes writes. "It is time, therefore, for equal, not junior partnership." To achieve this, he continues, both sides need "a new orientation."

A premise of meaningful lay-religious collaboration . . . is mutual respect. Second-class citizenship too easily spawns defensiveness among subjects and arrogance among superiors. Mutual rethinking is needed: more vigorous and imaginative effort by the religious to translate their religious ideals into education vocabulary and presence; a more serious concern on the part of lay people to know and incorporate the ideals of the sponsoring religious group.

McInnes offers some specific recommendations: (1) Religious should be more open and articulate about their ideals and their renewal; many of their lay colleagues are "simply in the dark about what it means to be a Holy Cross father or a Notre Dame sister"; (2) Clear establishment of "rules of the road":

everyone should know the rules: for hiring, recognition, advancement and--especially--termination. Charters and by-laws that are pious but not legal are a hidden threat in a litigious era. Job specifications, grievance procedures, and due-process regulations are no longer luxury options but standard equipment in a well-run institution.

(3) Professionalism must characterize the work of trustees, administration, and auxiliary services as well as academic life. (4) Collaboration "must allow for experimentation," requiring the elimination of "paternalism"; "a modest system of rewards" and "forebearance with failure" will "attract more participants than exhortations from the dean's office." For Jesuits in particular, McInnes draws the lesson:

Getting lay people to share more deeply in our Ignatian vision, making them feel like first-class citizens in every department and division, providing a real sense of professional partnership, extending, even beyond the call of duty, generous service and hospitality, these are the unfinished tasks of our Jesuit apostolate.

In July, 1978, Father Arrupe addressed the problem of "Jesuit-Lay Collaboration in Higher Education" in a speech at St. Joseph's College (now University) in Philadelphia. What he said of St. Joseph's could be applied to many Jesuit schools:

In its early decades Saint Joseph's College helped immigrant Catholic youth find their place in an environment in which Catholic values were not always welcomed. Now its task is to make the planet its concern in the sense that its campus, its buildings, and its entire educational program provide the setting wherein teachers and students, men and women, Jesuit and lay, can learn the attitudes, acquire the skills, and win the knowledge that will enable

them to engage responsibly in action promotive of faith and productive of justice. In this way Saint Joseph's will play its part in building up--not one nation--but one planet under God, where the basic rights of all people to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are effectively secure.

Having set forth this vision, Arrupe realistically noted the tensions which resulted from changes in governance at Jesuit universities with the development of lay boards of trustees and faculty participation in academic decision-making. Whatever the ambiguities of these changes, Arrupe argued that they were made in order that Jesuit institutions might "remain faithful to the world they serve, to the Church which called them initially into existence, and to themselves." These changes did lead to a "new set of relationships" between lay and Jesuit faculty and administrators. In order to move ahead, Arrupe urged that these relationships be "based on mutual trust, nurtured by frequent interchanges, structured in flexible ways, and above all directed toward competent service of third parties." Trust is indispensable, he argued, with lay and Jesuit faculty recognizing their different experiences and different gifts. For themselves such trust may be systematically and carefully nurtured.

We know how destructive academic politics can be, how stunting and stultifying the effects of suspiciousness. . . . You have discovered together that superficial cordiality and polite skirting of issues affecting your whole endeavor are not enough. They may prevent clashes, but they do not nurture trust, nor do they lead to the deepening of understanding--of ourselves, of one another, of issues--which is central to the scholarly endeavor. Your acceptance of the updated vision of the Jesuit reading of man's task today--the promotion of faith productive of justice--commits you to discussion and debate on questions that are prickly, perhaps frightening. In and through this dialogue we must support one another with our strengths and thus heal or at least lessen our weaknesses.

In this context of nurturing trust, Father Arrupe urged Jesuit and lay faculty, together, to share their concerns about the "larger questions of life, those that lie beneath and beyond any particular discipline," to regard such questions as part of the academic endeavor, and to find together "practical measures . . . to make it possible for ourselves to learn who we are and what we are about in our heart of hearts."

Finally Arrupe argued that dialogue on such matters, and relationship



generally, should be "directed outward, toward service to third parties: your students, your alumni, the community of Philadelphia, the people of your own country, those in special need in all parts of the world." A spirit of service in personal and institutional relationships could help people "avoid any kind of narcissistic involution" and be alert to "the real needs of people far and near." Service will "suggest topics for research in your different fields on which light is really needed more than those which, because faddish or contrived, deaden instead of refreshing the spirit." Finally, Arrupe concluded, in words that suggest that the new vision is not so new, that the challenge it conveys is an old one, now firmly planted in the realities of our world:

In short, if a spirit of service marks your cooperative efforts, you will find that as a joint Jesuit and lay body you can offer to citizens of the late 20th and early 21st centuries a solid and relevant educational experience. You will be giving them a taste of the life of the spirit-- of the spirit attuned to the great deeds of God and, therefore, turned outward in wonder and curiosity about nature, in compassion and fraternal affection for all men and women.<sup>44</sup>

## PART II. REFLECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE: A PROGRAM TO MEET THE CHIEF PRESENT NEEDS

### A. A First Need: Clarification of the Relationship between the Official Jesuit Goals and the Official Goals of a Jesuit College or University

At this moment in the history of Jesuit colleges and universities in America, there is more than ever a need for sound planning. The alternative is a combination of drifting and patchwork.

Given the shrinking resources and the dramatic shift in emphasis of the decree *Our Mission Today*, responsible authorities in the Society of Jesus are bound to ask whether the heavy manpower commitments required by the Society's agreements with institutions of higher education can and should be met. It is difficult for them to answer that question, or to make their decisions regarding formation and assignment of young Jesuits, until those in higher education have clarified what it is that they hope to do. That is, in any given Jesuit institution of higher education, the Jesuit administrators or teachers and the lay administrators or teachers must devise a means to explain how their goals relate to the mission of the Society of

Jesus as a whole, and what are the minimum requirements which the Society of Jesus will have to meet if it is to enable the local community of Jesuits, in cooperation with the lay administrators, teachers, and staff, to meet those objectives of the school. The tensions and divisions created by rapid change and the historic independence of individual Jesuits cause resistance to this request, or at least great difficulty in meeting it. Yet it seems equally clear that the effort must be made or, like the Detroit provincial, Society authorities will have to tell some boards of trustees within their jurisdiction that they are no longer able to meet the commitment to supply personnel.

In 1969 Andrew Greeley claimed that "the most serious obstacle to further improvement in Catholic higher education is the unsettled nature of the relationship between the school and the religious community which owns and staffs it." Today, while in most cases the religious community no longer owns the school and only in declining proportion staffs it, the legal relationship is much clearer. Both the college and the religious order are pledged to cooperate to preserve the Catholic character of the school and the characteristics given to it by its founding order. At Holy Cross, for example, the 1969 *Agreement* between the trustees and the college provides that a reasonable number of trustees be drawn from the Society, that the president be a member of the Society, that the rector of the Jesuit community be granted faculty status "as far as possible," that "the College will make every effort to seek out and accept qualified members of the Society for administrative positions and academic departments," and that the theology department will "have a permanent place in the curriculum" and be chaired "as far as possible" by a Jesuit. The Jesuits, for their part, agree "to supply personnel from the Society Community for the academic, administrative and religious needs of the College as far as possible" and to make an annual contribution to the college.

Jesuit schools are only beginning to face up to the problems that changing circumstances pose for such agreements. There are innumerable obstacles to be overcome, and leadership is crucial. At most schools, Jesuit administrators feel an urgent personal concern about the heritage for which they are responsible. Meeting alumni and donors, living with men whose lives have built and sustained the school, they are constantly reminded

that whatever the formalities of lay trustees and professionalized faculty, they personally must see to it that the school remains Jesuit and Catholic. This is a heavy assignment, made heavier by daily events such as a remark at table by a cranky old-timer, a phone call from a parent irate about something being taught a son or daughter, a letter from the provincial, or an accidental encounter with the bishop. Yet, while real and pressing, this task is less tangible, immediate, and substantial than the meetings to be attended, finances to be straightened out, and decisions to be made. The process of renewal in light of "contemporary Jesuit ideals" will raise too many problems; better to put it off for a while.

Behind this postponement, very often, lies a loss of confidence in Catholic education. Many an administrator can remember the repressive regime of the old Catholic college; more than a few once were in the vanguard fighting for professionalism, the autonomy of secular disciplines, respect for intellectual values. While they can justify affirmative action for "qualified Jesuits," they could not show their heads at a meeting of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) if it became known that they fought disciplinary autonomy, were urging the faculty to reshape the curriculum in light of the changing mission of the Church and the Society, or were giving preference in hiring to men and women who were sympathetic to those ideals. Deep down, out of their own life experience, they may doubt that academic excellence, as it is generally understood, is really compatible with religious commitment or even commitment to "a humanism defined first of all by the responsibility of each person toward his brothers and toward society." Only such a loss of faith can account for the remark of one Jesuit academic vice-president that "if sympathy with the Catholic objectives were the primary determinant in faculty selection, you might well end up with a second-rate faculty." Such a loss of faith could account, too, for the interview that is intended merely to determine whether candidates are "comfortable" with college objectives as set forth in the catalogue; for reliance on secular criteria for evaluation; for indifference to whether a faculty 85% lay knows anything about Catholic and Jesuit values, hopes, or aspirations; and, finally, it could account for the attitude that Jesuits are doing enough if they preserve a residual Jesuit influence in administration and trustees to insure that things do not get



out of hand. Only this scenario, too, can explain the occasional committed and alert Jesuit scholar who says in conversation that, working in a discipline from a clear base of religious conviction and social commitment, he feels more comfortable at a secular university than at most Jesuit schools.

B. A Second Need: Resolution of the Conflict between Academic Professionalism and the Catholicity of the Church-Related University

If there is to be another outcome of this process than the drifting with events which in fact characterizes most of contemporary Catholic higher education, the conflict between academic professionalism and the Catholicity of the Church-related college or university has to be resolved. Resolution of that conflict is the second of the four present needs we have singled out for comment.

In the detailed study of Marquette University cited above on page 1, Jesuit Gregory Lucey concluded that successful efforts to improve the school's academic quality seemed to undermine its Catholic identity:

Observable dynamics within the processes of appointing, rewarding and developing faculty reinforce the values of academic professionalism in the faculty while not supporting those values in the faculty which are more appropriate to the Catholicity of the university. Thus, rather than developing a synthesis of academic professionalism with concern for questions of ultimate social and moral importance, [Marquette] was perceived as allowing academic professionalism to displace Catholicity as the dominant value orientation within the faculty.<sup>45</sup>

Publicized conflicts at a number of Jesuit institutions since 1976 reinforce the conviction that, while there is clear public commitment of boards of trustees to maintain the Jesuit and Catholic character of the schools, there has been little systematic effort to reconcile this responsibility with the actual commitment to professional (often narrowly disciplinary) standards for hiring, evaluation, curriculum, and other matters of academic governance. Nor is the problem normally one of Jesuits or trustees committed to Catholicity and lay faculty committed to professionalism, but often one of internalized tensions between moral, ethical, and religious values and professional values within both Jesuit and lay faculty and administrators. There are relatively few academic persons today who wish either to jettison the Catholic and Jesuit "presence" altogether or to restore ecclesiastical



controls or Catholic domination. Rather, for all concerned the issue is one of reconciling institutional identity and integrity with a firm commitment to serious research and teaching. No fruitful collaboration aimed at clarifying identity and mission will be possible until the problems involved are brought out into the open and faced by all parties concerned.

C. A Third Need: Clarification of the Mission of the Jesuit University in the Context of the Contemporary Church, Nation, and World

Another issue which must be dealt with is the relevance of social analysis and evaluation to the question of mission in higher education. For almost a decade the Jesuits have been urging their members to evaluate their work periodically on the basis of careful analysis of its social, political, and cultural context, theological reflection on the results of that analysis, and action that is both theologically consistent and socially and morally appropriate. Recently the American Jesuit provincials asked a team of scholars and Jesuit leaders to analyze the context of American Jesuit ministries, that is, United States society and culture. Drawing upon the work of several other notable Jesuit scholars, the study team stated in its report, entitled *The Context of Our Ministries*:

It is our position (especially from the viewpoint of the more subtle forms of seduction and intimidation of spirit) that our economic-cultural system may be the least favorable context of our ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It claims not only the lives of the people to whom we minister (the poor, in their languishing for the American pleasure-power dream, even when they turn to violent forms of desperation; the rich, in their retrenched fear that they may lose something, that they may have to share the abundance which has sadly already weighed them down and disillusioned them). It also claims us, the ministers.<sup>46</sup>

That a team of nationally respected Jesuits could reach such negative conclusions about the United States is notable in itself and suggests how dramatic may become the struggle within the Jesuit community over the Society's direction in this country.

More important for our consideration here, however, is the question whether the process itself has relevance to the issue of the mission and identity of higher education. At the 50th anniversary of Boston College Law School, Peter Henriot, a member of the *Context* study team, asked the

faculty and administration to consider this question: "What relevance, if any, does Boston College Law School have to the issue of the future survival of the human family?"<sup>47</sup> To ask that question is to set the discussion of the mission of Jesuit and Catholic higher education in a wider context, the same context of contemporary history which has shaped the renewal of the Church and the reorientation of the Society of Jesus.

Without this wider framework, the question of the Jesuit and Catholic character of any particular school easily becomes domesticated. The absence of a strong sense of identity and mission undoubtedly does create morale problems and contributes to a lack of communication and the isolation of individual teachers and administrators from one another. In the recent history of perhaps every Jesuit school, a declining proportion of Jesuit faculty, reformed interpretations of liberal arts education, and the laicization and professionalization of the faculty have all undoubtedly contributed to a decline in a corporate sense of mission and purpose. Yet, one suspects that it was not the *Ratio studiorum* which gave unity and coherence to Jesuit schools a generation ago; it was a rough consensus on the answer to the question: Why a Jesuit and Catholic education? Jesuit schools prepared young men and women for successful participation in American life while insuring continued loyalty to the Church, its faith, its moral discipline, and its organizational requirements. Jesuit schools produced intelligent and successful Americans and intelligent and loyal Catholics.

Today what are such schools preparing people for? The Church has the right to ask--through parents, trustees, and benefactors--that they prepare students for intelligent participation in the contemporary Church. If the Church has changed its forms of internal life and its understanding of its mission in the world, it has the right to expect that Catholic schools will enable graduates to participate in that life and mission. If, as in the case of the Jesuits, the sponsoring religious community has made that renewed understanding its own, it seems doubly appropriate that the faculty, staff, and students of the school should take the questions posed by the community seriously. Similarly, if the world has changed, or if perceptions of the world have changed, so that the very terms of success and participation require reexamination, then Catholic schools can only respond to the issue of mission by examining whether it is any longer appropriate to prepare

people simply for participation in the world as it is. Both the Church and the Jesuits, at the highest levels of authority, have concluded that an educated Catholic participation must be aimed at changing the world, not simply succeeding within it.

Accordingly it is not enough to concede, as happened at one college, that the faculty have become professionalized and acknowledge accountability only within the context of their discipline, but one must also ask whether such professionalism is benign or whether it may be linked to the injustice and violence which so upset many Jesuits today. In a nation increasingly marked by private goals pursued at the expense of public welfare, all institutions are tempted to an excessive preoccupation with survival and the achievement of exclusive goals or particular objectives. Yet our fragile nation and our broken world need more than ever persons and communities who genuinely care about the world and the people in it and are prepared to work together, in Father Arrupe's words, "toward the dismantling of unjust social structures so that the weak, the oppressed, the marginalized of this world may be set free."<sup>48</sup>

Of course it is one thing for a religious community or a school to commit itself to "education for justice," another thing to develop intelligent and effective programs. For five years the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities has been actively encouraging its members to develop innovative educational programs of justice education and monitoring the work of five pilot schools. Numerous other agencies have been preparing materials and developing resources, not only in the Catholic community but in other church-related schools and such nondenominational groups as the World Without War Council and the Consortium for Peace Research and Education. At Catholic schools programs range from the successful department of Peace Studies at Manhattan College, through Villanova's effort to develop a spectrum of new courses in several disciplines, to special institutes established outside normal academic structures. Lectureships, programs of career planning, internships, special seminars, as well as courses in Catholic social thought mark the numerous efforts to respond to the call of the contemporary Church that people be educated for participation in the Church's mission to face and help resolve the pressing issues of the day.<sup>49</sup>

To date the overall impact of such programs has been limited. With



some notable exceptions, most tend to be associated primarily with departments of religious studies or with campus ministry and thus remain somewhat marginal to academic life as a whole. Excessive concern to make an immediate impact through visible courses and programs has led schools to neglect faculty development, research, and issues of justice and peace related to specific disciplines, so that no Catholic school can claim to have carried through an intelligent, comprehensive review of priorities and programs such as the Jesuit provincials have called for. As a result, few Catholic schools can claim to have integrated their professed values into the overall life of the community to the degree that such non-Catholic schools as Goshen or Earlham Colleges have done.

#### D. A Fourth Need: The Will to Do

Yet, what is lacking is not the knowledge or resources, but the will. Experimentation to date has produced a body of experience which can be drawn upon to develop intelligent strategies if school authorities, particularly academic leaders, only make the determination to do so. Pope John Paul II stressed research needed by the Church, training persons for participation in the Church, and building a faith community on campus as the three tasks of the Catholic college or university. The research needs of the U.S. Church are clear but are not being articulated to the campuses, and few in the schools are yet ready to listen. The skills and knowledge needed for full participation in the modern Church are also no mystery, after a decade and a half of renewal, but once again few are looking to the campuses and few faculty or administrators are seeking to learn what needs to be done. Faith communities of all sorts already exist on most campuses, but like most parishes, these communities have not yet discovered their relationship to the wider Church beyond the school and beyond the local community. Commitment, leadership, and intelligent strategy could supply the missing ingredients. Members of the religious community must seek out the interested faculty and students and begin the work that must be done.

The excitement of Vatican II and of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations derived from the willingness of the participants to face directly the most challenging problems of the human community at this point in history. Development of a shared determination to engage these issues on the basis

of a shared commitment to faith and justice, to reason and freedom and human decency, together with a sense of urgency arising from involvement with the struggles of real people, an involvement specially available to the Church-related, Jesuit school, might allow participants in these schools to overcome petty conflicts and join together in pursuit of a shared vision. In the absence of the effort, which is surely the basic effort of the Church around the world, serious questions certainly arise regarding the continued support of these colleges--whether by the Jesuits or by the Church at large.

For the good of the Church and its people, the renewal of faith and commitment in Catholic higher education is essential. Of course, one reason is that it will help the Church; but some of us are naive enough to feel that the Church and its rich array of institutions constitute a critically important segment of the national and world community. In the continuing struggle to better this larger community, to preserve human dignity and the possibility of a free and open world, to develop a sense of global awareness and a hope that can resist the prevailing pressures toward cynicism and dehumanization, the Church can play a decisive role. For that reason, for the truth that it proclaims, the Church is worth preserving and strengthening, and so are its religious orders and the colleges and universities they sponsor.





FOOTNOTES

- 1 In its original form this study was a working paper prepared for consideration by a committee at Holy Cross College studying the Jesuit and Catholic mission of the school. In revised form it was delivered to a faculty assembly at Fairfield University, September 26, 1980. With other papers presented that day it appeared in a pamphlet "Jesuits in Higher Education, Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow" printed at Fairfield. That earlier version includes a more detailed examination of Project One, the most ambitious effort so far by the American Assistancy of the Society to renew its apostolate in higher education.
- 2 Philip Gleason, "American Catholic Higher Education: An Historical Perspective" in Robert Hassenger, editor, *The Shaped Catholic Higher Education* (Chicago, 1967), p. 52.
- 3 Materials on the Project One consultation were made available to me in 1978. This quote is from an announcement from the planning committee.
- 4 Gregory F. Lucey, S.J., "The Meaning and Maintenance of Catholicity as a Distinctive Characteristic of American Catholic Higher Education: A Case Study" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1978).
- 5 Projections of declining enrollments differ. E. I. Wakin cited Labor Department figures of 20% in "Can the Catholic College Afford to Stay Catholic?", *U. S. Catholic*, September, 1978, p. 29.
- 6 Timothy S. Healy, S.J., "The Ignatian Heritage and Today's College," *America*, November 5, 1977, p. 304.
- 7 *Catholic Higher Education and the Church's Pastoral Mission* (Washington, 1979) p. 4.
- 8 Pope John Paul II, Speech at Catholic University, October 7, 1979.
- 9 *Occasional Papers on Catholic Higher Education*, II (April, 1976), 1-11.
- 10 Jude P. Dougherty, Desmond Fitzgerald, Thomas Langan and Kenneth Schmitz, "The Secularization of Western Culture and the Catholic College and University," *Current Issues in Catholic Higher Education*, II (Summer, 1981), 23.
- 11 Sister Kathleen Ash, "Faculty: Partners in Renewal," *Delta Epsilon Sigma Bulletin*, XXIII (May, 1978), 39.
- 12 Ibid., 40-41.
- 13 Figures made available by the Provincial Office of the New England Province of the Jesuits.
- 14 "Jesuit Universities and Colleges: Their Commitment in a World of Change," Jesuit Educational Association, *Proceedings* (1969, p. 21) of the Denver Workshop.
- 15 This was a consistent theme in the reports of Project One. One school reported that while the lay faculty looked upon the Jesuit community as the real source of power and influence, many Jesuit professors looked upon the Jesuit administration in the same way. Several communities

recommended that Jesuit administrators meet with the community regularly to discuss college policy, something the lay faculty probably thought already took place.

- 16 *Proceedings*, Jesuit Educational Association (1969, p. 20).
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 18 This was a description by the rector of one local community's response to Project One.
- 19 Quoted in Thomas P. Faase, S.J., "Making the Jesuits More Modern" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1976), pp. 47-48.
- 20 Decree 4, *Our Mission Today*, no. 2, in *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis, 1977), p. 411. (hereafter abbreviated *DocsGC31&32*).
- 21 Healy, "The Ignatian Heritage," p. 306.
- 22 Faase, "Making the Jesuits More Modern," pp. 58-100. The citations are from *Our Mission Today*, nos. 9 and 26, a (*DocsGC31&32*, pp. 413, 420).
- 23 Decree 2, *Jesuits Today*, no. 9, in *DocsGC31&32*, p. 403.
- 24 Pedro Arrupe, S.J. "Men for Others," in *Justice with Faith Today: Selected Letters and Addresses--II* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980), p. 137.
- 25 Pope Paul VI's observations on the respective roles of the priests and laity are found in *DocsGC31&32*, p. 548; his remarks to Jesuit college and university officials are in *Origins*, August 23, 1974, pp. 175-176.
- 26 William Ryan, S.J., "Some Observations on the Present Status and Future Trends of Social Ministry in the U.S. and Canadian Provinces of the Society of Jesus," February 20, 1972, privately circulated.
- 27 Pedro Arrupe, S.J., "The Intellectual Apostolate in the Society's Mission Today," in *Other Apostolates Today: Selected Letters and Addresses--III* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1981), pp. 111-126.
- 28 *National Jesuit News*, November, 1978.
- 29 Healy, "The Ignatian Heritage," p. 306.
- 30 Commencement Address, privately circulated.
- 31 William J. Sullivan, S.J., "Jesuit Higher Education Today," in *Jesuits in Higher Education*, pp. 7-8.
- 32 Dominic Maruca, S.J., "Our Personal Witness as a Power Toward Evangelizing Our Culture," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, XI, no. 2 (March, 1979), p. 34.
- 33 "The Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World" in David O'Brien and Thomas Shannon, editors, *Renewing the Earth: Catholic Documents on Peace, Justice and Liberation* (Garden City, New York, 1977), p. 178.
- 34 "Justice in the World," in *Renewing the Earth*, p. 391.
- 35 Richard McBrien, "The Idea of a Catholic University," address to

- Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, February 3, 1981, in *National Catholic Reporter*, March 27, 1981.
- 36 For a fuller discussion of Project One see my "Jesuit, Lay Faculty and Catholic Higher Education" in *Jesuits in Higher Education*, cited above.
  - 37 "The Jesuit Mission in Higher Education," letter of American Provincials, privately circulated.
  - 38 Decree 4, Our Mission Today, no. 26, b, in *DocsGC31&32*, p. 420.
  - 39 Project One Materials, report of Wheeling College.
  - 40 *National Jesuit News*, November, 1978.
  - 41 Ibid. Latest figures are that 181 Jesuits were in doctoral studies in 1980. Of these almost half were in theology (56), philosophy (12), and history (17). Another 28 were in education or psychology. Six were working in science, but 3 of these were in computer sciences. Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, *Higher Education Report*, October, 1980.
  - 42 *National Catholic Reporter*, January 10, 1975.
  - 43 "Working Together: An Educational Model," *America*, November 5, 1977, pp. 300-303.
  - 44 Pedro Arrupe, S.J., "Jesuit-Lay Collaboration in Higher Education," privately circulated.
  - 45 Lucey, "The Meaning and Maintenance."
  - 46 The Context Study Team, "Evaluative Summary" in *The Context of Our Ministries* (Washington: Center of Concern, and St. Louis: American Assistancy Seminar, 1981), p. 23. The team consisted of two sociologists, a theologian, a philosopher, the director of the Washington-based Center of Concern, and a Jesuit pastor and community organizer. The team drew on the assistance of at least seven other respected Jesuit scholars and academic leaders, whose study papers are included in the text cited above. The judgment reached measured the distance that has opened between Jesuit perspectives and those dominant on almost all American campuses, including their own.
  - 47 Peter Henriot, S.J., "Ethics for the Survival of the Human Family," in *Boston College Law Review* XXI (July, 1980), p. 1055.
  - 48 Arrupe, "Men for Others," in *Justice with Faith Today*, pp. 124-138; see Robert Bellah, "The Role of Preaching in a Corrupt Republic," *Christianity and Crisis*, December 25, 1978, pp. 317-322.
  - 49 I discussed these matters earlier in "The Holy Cross Case," *Commonweal*, October 8, 1976, pp. 647-653, and made specific suggestions in "The Holy Cross Case Revisited," *National Jesuit News*, April, 1978. For a summary of the present state of education for justice, see *Current Issues in Catholic Higher Education*, I (Winter, 1981).
  - 50 For a non-Catholic's statement of the importance to American society of Catholic education, see Peter Berger's address to the National Catholic Educational Association in *Origins*, August, 1976.





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